basis from the recent enhancement of postal charges;

(b) the proportion of this additional burden likely to be placed on economically disadvantaged sections; and

(c) whether Government have any proposal to supply at subsidised rates post cards and inland letters to low-income groups through the public distribution system?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) The total additional revenue expected to be collected in a financial year from the recent enhancement of postal charges effective from 31st August, 1998 is Rs. 272 crores.

(b) The impact of revision of tariff in respect of 8 Postal Services, namely, Competition Post Card, Letter Cards, Letters, Parcels, Registration, Insurance, Acknowledgement and Money Order Form is likely to be minimal on economically disadvantaged sections as no tariff revision has been effected in the case of Post Cards and in the rate of Money Order commission which are generally used by them. Even in respect of the 8 Postal Services, the revision of tariff has been marginal in order to partly meet the increased cost of operations of various services requiring considerable subsidy from the General Budget.

(c) No, Sir.

Undertaking from Private Telecom Operators

*177. DR. D. VENKATESHWAR RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister's Office has asked the department of Telecommunications to take undertakings from private telecom operators who have defaulted in paying licence fee for cellular or basic service;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) its effect on private telecom operators?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

Alternate Route for Kailash-Mansarover Yatra

*178. SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN: SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be please to state:

(a) whether Government are thinking of opening an alternate route for Kilash Mansarovar Yatra in view of the recent mishap resulting in tragic death of about 200 persons at Malpa en-route to Kailash-Mansarovar Yatra;

(b) if so, whether any survey has been conducted and with what results; and

(c) whether Government will also take into consideration the old traditional route through Tunjaun pass in Garhwal Himalayas?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) to (c) On August 18, 1998 205 people, Including 60 yatris of the 12th batch of the Kallash Mansarovar Yatra were killed in a landslide which engulfed Malpa village in Pithoragarh District of Uttar Pradesh.

Taking into account the growing popularity of the Yatra amongst Hindu pilgrims, the constraints along the existing route, and requests from residents in the border areas, the Government have taken up, since 1993, proposals for an alternate/additional route for the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra with the Chinese side. We have proposed the Shipki La (Himachal Pradesh), and Demchok (Ladakh, Jammu & Kashmir) routes. We have proposed these routes taking into account the existing logistical facilities which extend almost upto the border.